

The BAR Process & Height Districts in Historic Charleston

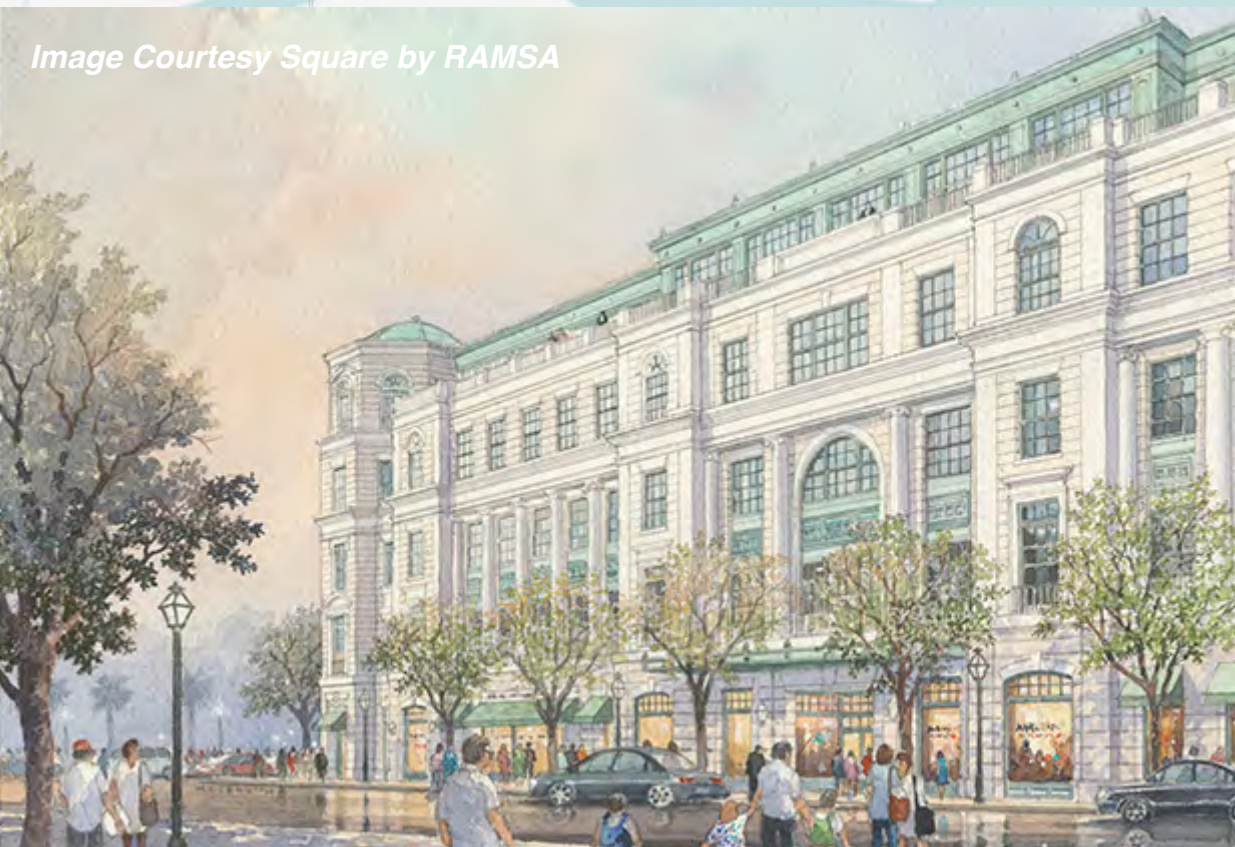


Image Courtesy Square by RAMSA

BAR Presentation
May 16, 2017

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DPZ CoDESIGN

Overview

- **Amendments** to the text of the BAR Regulations
- **Guidelines and development principles** to assist the public and BAR (for new construction and renovations and repairs)
- **Height** study and amendment to the Old City Height District Ordinance and Map
- **Rules of Procedure** updates for BAR-S & BAR-L

Proposed amendments to Chapter 54, Part 6 of the Zoning Ordinance – BAR regulations

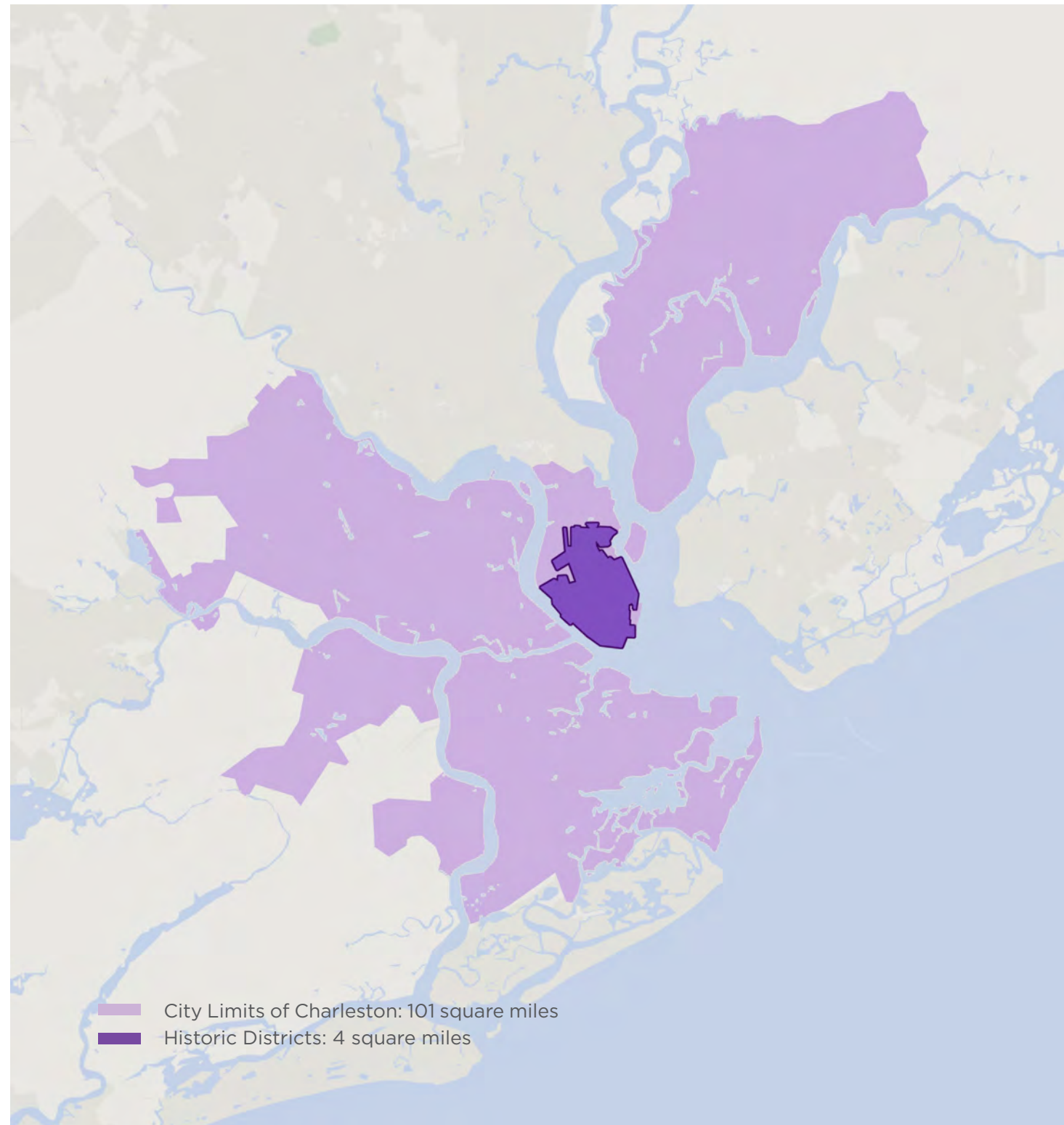
BAR Regulations

- The definition of “demolition” has been revised, and “demolition by neglect” has been added.
- Added definitions, such as: “Height”, “Scale”, “Mass”.
- When necessary to achieve a quorum, an alternate of one Board may serve on the other Board.
- Updated and modified application procedures:
 - pre-application conference, conceptual, preliminary and final approval, courtesy review & expedited consideration for affordable housing.

Proposed “Board of Architectural
Review Guidelines for New
Construction and Renovations and
Repairs”

Principles

Charleston is a city of international acclaim due to a myriad of factors, but particularly because of the steadfast commitment of its citizens and leaders to **maintain and promote architectural principles that document its history and heritage and encourage new construction that is compatible with that heritage, but also reflective of its time.**



Principles

A principle activated by “**shall**” is a mandatory rule, unless applicant makes a compelling argument to the contrary.

A principle activated by “**should**” is an option strongly recommended by the BAR.

A principle activated by “**may**” is an option that can be requested by the BAR.



Principle

Narrow frontages permit a larger number and variety of structures to line the sidewalk, thereby enlivening the pedestrian experience. Additionally, vertical orientation reinforces Charleston's visual character, which has always tended towards the vertical.

A means of achieving this principle are buildings that are narrow towards the frontage—even commercial buildings, which may be massed as a single bar or as a series of wings.

Guidelines Summary

GENERALLY EASIER TO APPROVE < > MORE DIFFICULT TO APPROVE

URBAN GUIDELINES

TALLER CEILING HEIGHTS < > SHORTER CEILING HEIGHT

NARROW TO THE FRONTAGE < > WIDER TO THE FRONTAGE

BASE DIFFERENTIATED < > BASE CONTINUOUS

MANY SMALL BUILDINGS < > FEW LARGE BUILDINGS

PARKING MASKED FROM FRONTAGE < > PARKING VISIBLE FROM FRONTAGE

PARKING PROVIDED < > EXCESS PARKING PROVIDED

ARCHITECTURAL GUIDELINES

NATURAL & INTEGRAL MATERIALS < > COMPOSITE & CLADDING MATERIALS

STRUCTURAL EXPRESSION < > SURFACE EXPRESSION

APPLICATION OF LOCAL CRAFT < > ABSENCE OF CRAFT

UNIFIED STOREFRONT DESIGN < > STOREFRONT BY COMPONENT

CLEAR GLAZING < > DARK OR MIRROR GLAZING

VERTICAL PROPORTIONS < > HORIZONTAL PROPORTIONS

REPETITIVE FENESTRATION < > MIXED FENESTRATION

SMALL MULLIONS < > LARGE OR NO MULLIONS

THICKER WALL DEPTH < > THINNER WALL DEPTH

SIMPLE MASSING < > COMPLEX MASSING

SHADING ELEMENTS PROVIDED< > NO SHADING ELEMENTS

Proposed amendments to Chapter
54, Sec. 54-306 of the Zoning
Ordinance – Old City Heights District

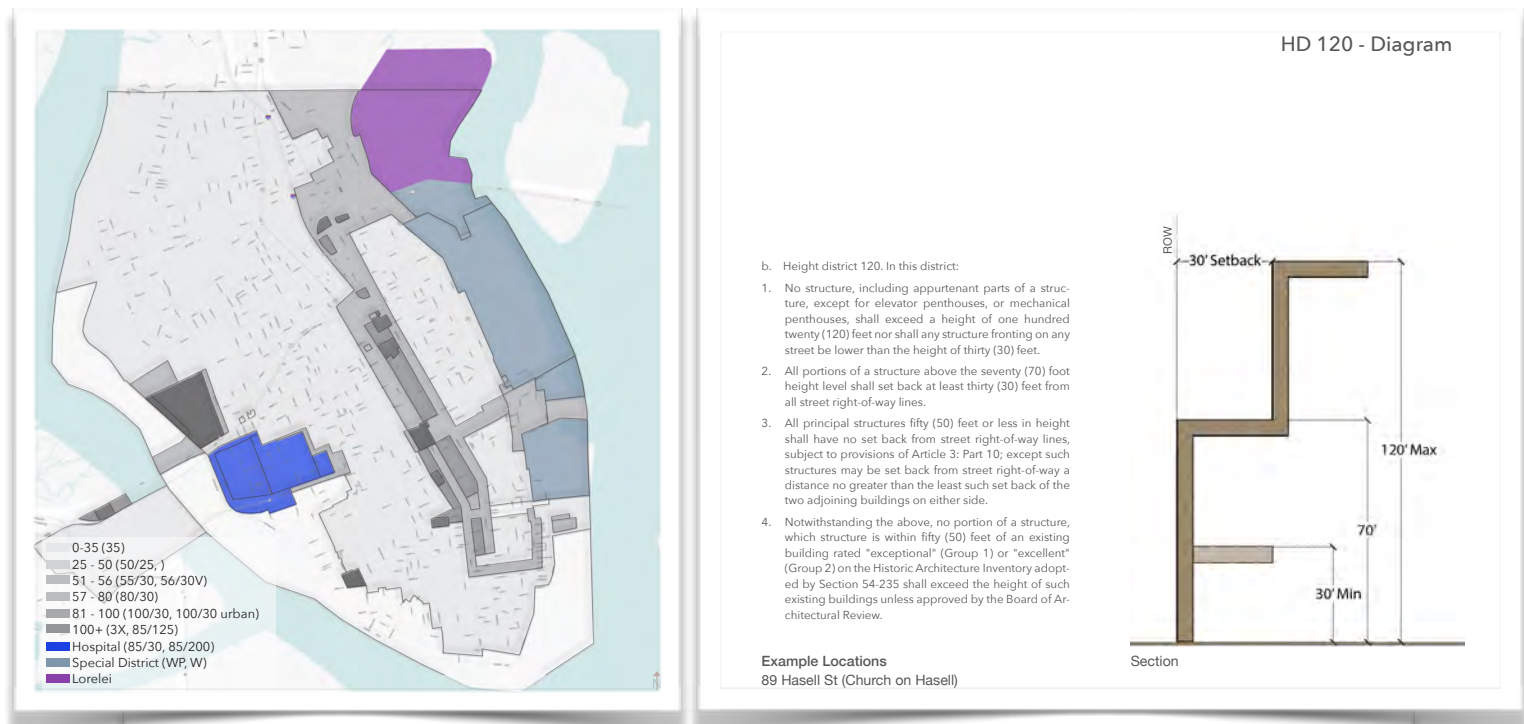
Old City's Heights District

ANALYSIS

- Zoning Analysis, by height
- Contextual analysis
- Conversion Matrix:
Predominant building heights
- Proposed New Height Districts
- Revised Heights Map

RESULTS:

Except for a few districts (3X, 85/200, 85/125, 85/30, 100/30, 80/30, 50W, W and WP), height will now be measured by stories rather than feet.



Existing Heights District Regs								Notes
Z	Height Zone	Max Height (ft)	Max Height (Stories Translated)	Max Height @ Stepback	Setback	Min Height	Min Ground Floor Height	
HEIGHT DISTRICTS								
1	35 (FIRM)	35ft / 2.5 stories (46ft) accessory bldg: 11ft	2					Market St
2	50/25 (FIRM)	50ft / 3.5 stories (4) accessory bldg: 11ft	4			25ft		
	50W (refer to 54-306.j.4)	50ft	4		**25ft/10ft off hwm			
	120 (refer to 54-306.b.4) ***	120ft	9	70ft	30ft	30ft	N/A	Church on Hassell
3	55/30	55ft	4		none permitted	30ft		
	55/30S	55ft	4		N/A	30ft		
	56/30V (FEMA Velocity Zone) ***	56ft* (70ft)	4			30ft		
4	80/30 ***	80ft	6	55ft	25ft off ROW	30ft	N/A	
5	100/30 (refer to 54-306.c.4)	100ft	7	70ft	30ft	30ft		
	100/30 Urban Street	4 stories - north/south facing	4	+ 100 = 100ft		30ft	15ft	RAMSA
	(refer to Art 3)	5 stories - east/west facing	5	+ 25 = 100ft		30ft	15ft	
6	85/125 ***	125ft	9	85ft	40ft / 55ft off CL	30ft		

** except water dependent structures

*** proximity to Historic Architecture Inventory Group 1 & 2

Height by Stories, better for...

Historic Preservationists:

- Protects historical proportions of Charleston facades;

Developers:

- Provides better cost control & marketability;
- Recognize needs of different uses;

Architects:

- Gives greater creativity for variety of roof forms;
- Provides greater flexibility on variety of building heights

Residents:

- Environmental Health - Encourages better air and ventilation;
- Beauty - Encourages more gracious floor-to-ceiling heights;
- Provides proper allowance for attic space;

General Public:

- Provides better transitions for step backs that are more legally justifiable (feet are arbitrary measurements, vs/ stepbacks to the story height of adjacent lots); and
- Gives more predictability.

Contextualized Heights Map

General Requirements

1. Heights shall be measured in stories, or feet, as specified. Exclusions include: 3X, 85/200, 85/125, 85/30, 100/30, 80/30, 55/30S, 55/30, 50W, W and WP.
2. Maximum height for stories shall be taken from the ground floor finished elevation.
3. Where height of stories are specified in feet, the measurement shall be from finished floor to finished floor.
4. If a building is required to be raised per FEMA requirements, that same height shall be applied to the max. height allowed, up to a maximum of 6ft.
5. Any area under a structure in excess of 6ft shall be counted as a story.
6. ~~BAR is empowered to require a downward adjustment of one half story in the number of stories based on the number of stories that predominate in its immediate surroundings.~~

General Requirements

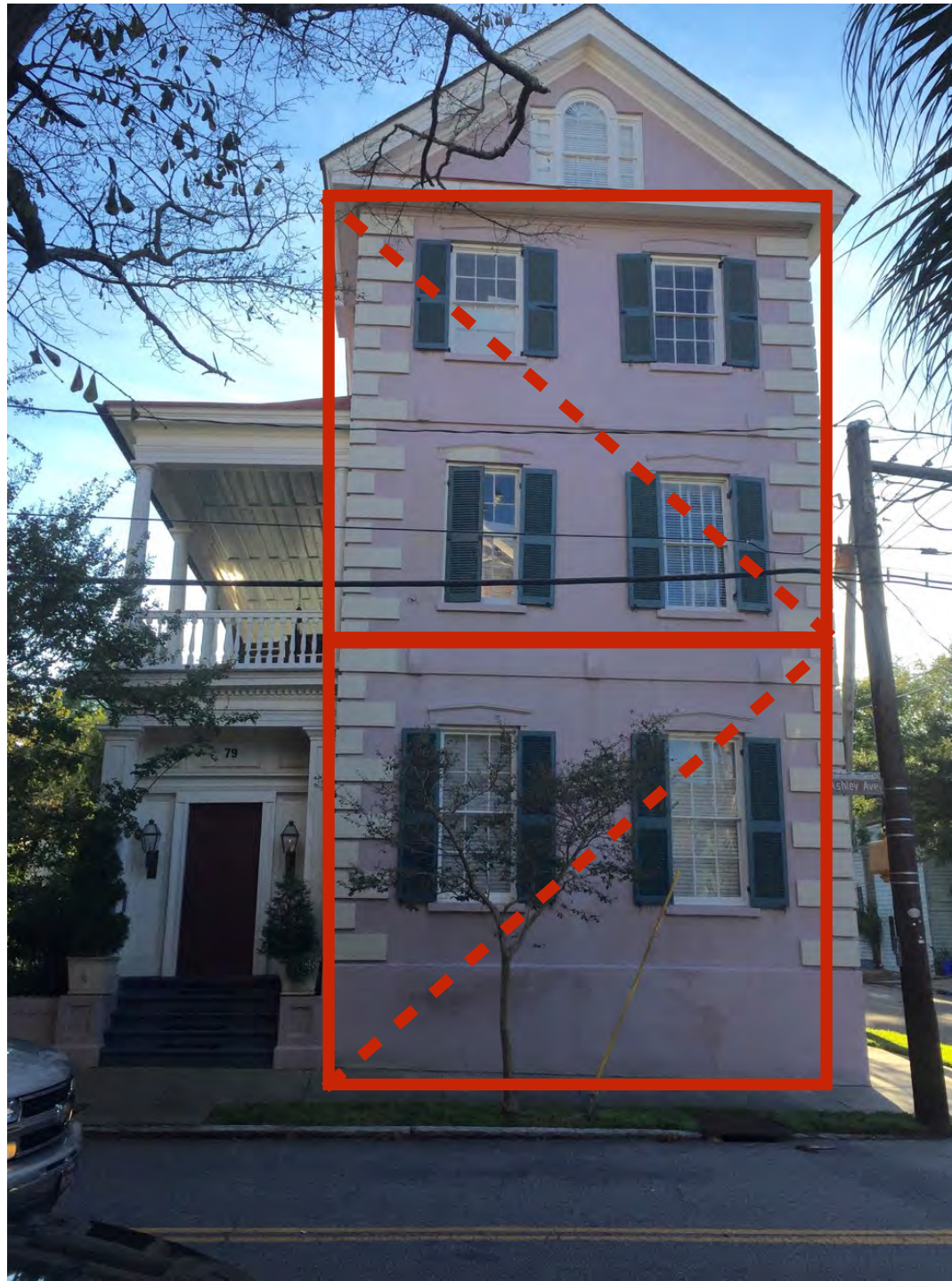
7. Floors shall be measured as follows:

- i. Max. height of any residential floor shall be 12ft, unless otherwise specified. Any dimension above shall constitute a second floor. The BAR may grant a waiver up to 14ft on the ground floor, based on architectural merit and context.
- ii. Min. height of any residential floor shall not be less than 10ft (excludes single-family residence, duplex or townhouse)
- iii. Max. height of any nonresidential floor shall be 20ft, unless otherwise specified. Any dimension above shall constitute a second floor. The BAR may grant a waiver up to 25ft on the ground floor, based on architectural merit and context.
- iv. Min. height of any commercial floor shall not be less than 14ft, unless otherwise specified.
- v. ~~The BAR is empowered to require a downward adjustment to floor heights, based on context of the structures in its immediate surroundings.~~

8. Half stories shall be permitted as specified by zone. Half stories shall constitute a maximum 50% habitable use of the attic space or 50% of the habitable area, whichever is less.

General Requirements

9. Building height to roof eave shall not exceed twice the building width at frontage. The BAR may waive this provision based on architectural merit and context.



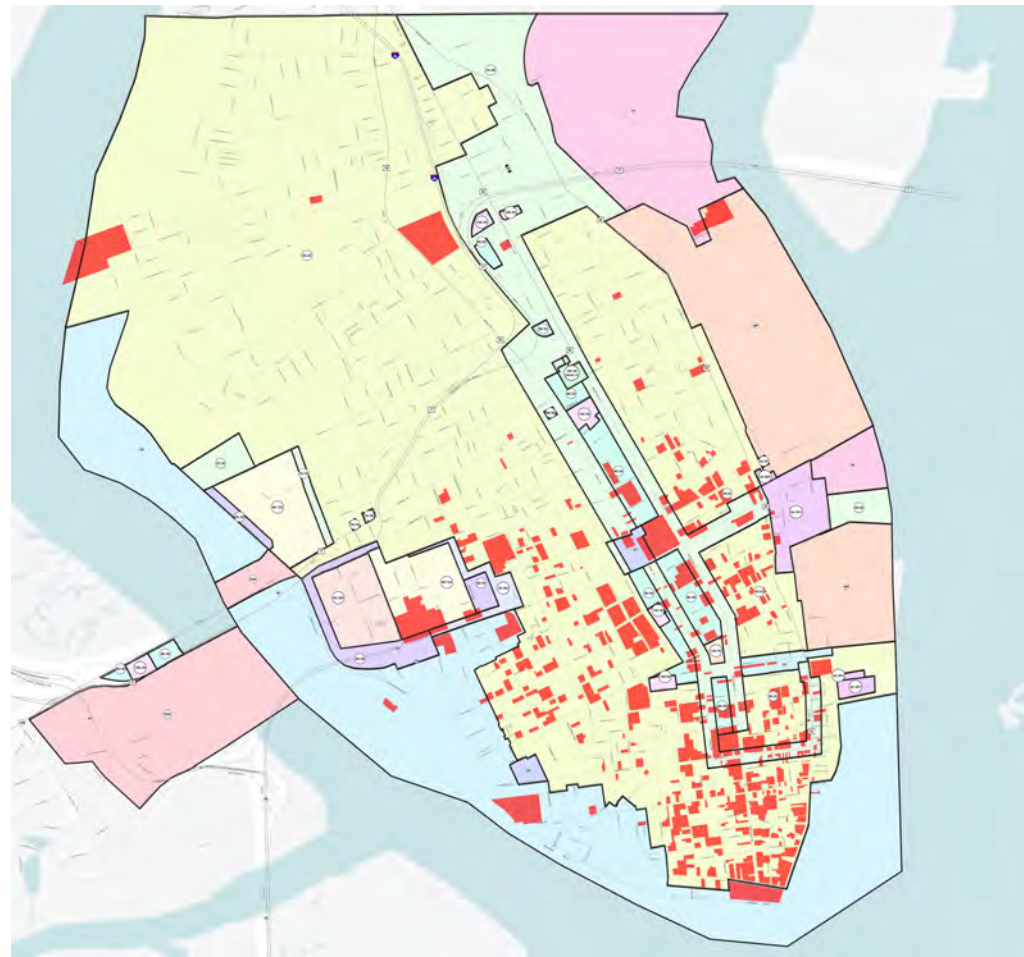
General Requirements

10. There shall be no minimum building height requirement, **unless required by the applicable height district.**



General Requirements

11. Appurtenances shall not be permitted to exceed the maximum height, unless otherwise specified.
12. If any portion of a structure is within 50ft of any existing structure rated “exceptional” (Group 1) or “excellent” (Group 2) on the Historic Architecture Inventory, or a Landmark structure or a structure on the National Register, no portion of that structure shall exceed the height of such existing structures unless approved by the BAR.



General Requirements

13. Mechanical equipment on a roof shall be visually screened from the street with parapets or other types of visual screens of the minimum height necessary to conceal the same.
14. Additional buildings that are not accessory buildings and additions to buildings subject to the BAR jurisdiction shall be subordinate in height, scale and mass to the existing building. BAR may waive this provision if appropriate.

General Requirements

15. Parking garages shall not exceed the height of the principal building on site. Parking garages shall not be constrained by floor-to-floor height requirements, but stand-alone parking garages shall appear from the street to conform to the number of stories permitted in its height district.



General Requirements

16. In the heights district where additional height may be awarded on the basis of architectural merit and context, if the property is not subject to the jurisdiction of the BAR, to request such additional height, the owner must submit the plans to the BAR for review and approval.
17. Successional rezoning - A request for a rezoning shall only be provided to the next Height District.

Regs for Height District 2.5

- Maximum building height shall be 2.5 stories, up to 35 feet maximum.
- The Board of Architectural Review may permit an additional half story on buildings subject to its jurisdiction based on architectural merit and context.

Regs for Height District 3

- Maximum building height shall be 3 stories.
- The attic shall not be habitable., ~~and eave to roof peak shall be no greater than 7ft.~~
- The commercial ground floor shall not exceed 14ft.
- The Board of Architectural Review may waive the limitation on habitable attic space based on architectural merit and context.

Regs for Height District 2.5 - 3.5

- **On ROW's > 50ft**, the building height shall be limited to 3 stories and a maximum height of 45ft.
- **On ROW's between 35ft to 50ft**, the building height shall be limited to 3 stories max, and shall also be limited by the ROW width of the street in height with a max 1:1 ratio. Maximum building height shall not exceed 45ft.
- **On ROW's < 35ft** the building height shall be limited to 2.5 stories.
- For multi-family buildings, **subject to its jurisdiction**, BAR may permit up to 4 stories and up to 45ft max. & for PUDs based on architectural merit and context.
- New structure that requires ground floor be elevated more than 2ft as per FEMA shall be allowed the equivalent in height up to a max of 50ft.
- Commercial ground floor shall be between 12ft min. and 16ft max, **unless BAR grants a waiver**.

Regs for Height District 3.5

- Maximum building height shall be 3.5 stories, up to 50ft max.
- The Board of Architectural Review may permit an additional 1/2 story, based on architectural merit and context, up to a maximum of 50ft.

Regs for Height District 4

- Maximum building height shall be 4 stories, except for properties located in the V zone per FEMA maps, in which case, the maximum building height shall not exceed 5 stories.
- The Board of Architectural Review may permit an additional 1/2 story, based on architectural merit and context.

Regs for Height District 5

- Building height shall not exceed 5 stories.
- BAR may permit an additional story based on architectural merit and context.
- Additional height for ornamental appurtenances may be permitted by BAR, based on architectural merit and context.
- Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances (mechanical and structural systems) shall be permitted based on the following standards:
 - They shall not exceed 9ft. in height.
 - They shall be placed to the rear or side of buildings where possible.
- Structures **that are 5 stories or more**, shall be abutted by sidewalks no less than 8ft in width.

Regs for Height District 6

- Building height shall not exceed 6 stories.
- BAR may permit an additional story based on architectural merit and context.
- Additional height for ornamental appurtenances may be permitted by BAR, based on architectural merit and context.
- Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances (mechanical and structural systems) shall be permitted based on the following standards:
 - They shall not exceed 9ft. in height.
 - They shall be placed to the rear or side of buildings where possible.
- Structures **that are 6 stories or more**, shall be abutted by sidewalks no less than 8ft in width.

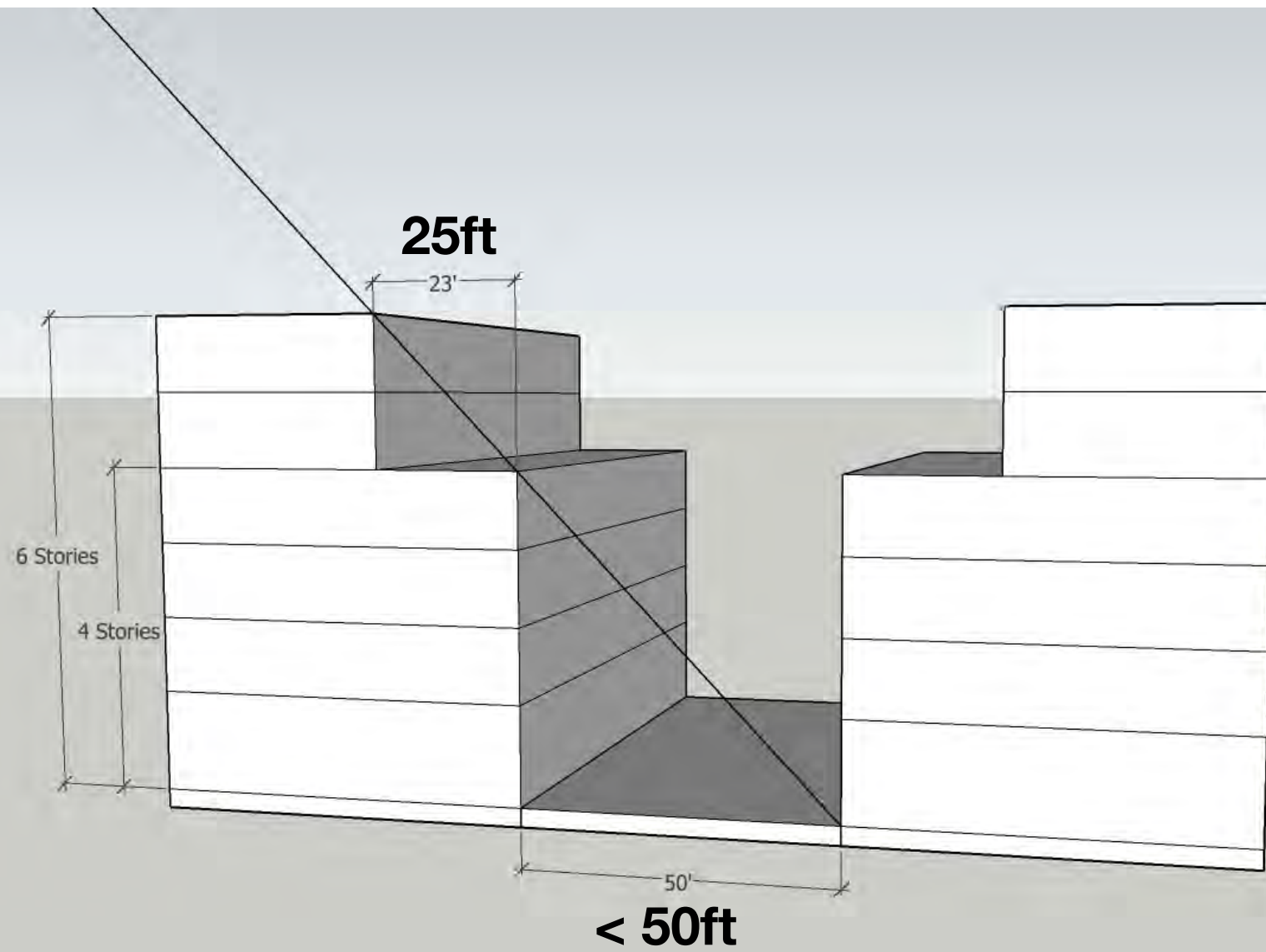
Regs for Height District 8

- Building height shall not exceed 8 stories.
- BAR may permit an additional story based on architectural merit and context.
- Additional height for ornamental appurtenances may be permitted by BAR, based on architectural merit and context.
- Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances (mechanical and structural systems) shall be permitted based on the following standards:
 - They shall not exceed 9ft. in height.
 - They shall be placed to the rear or side of buildings where possible.
- Structures **that are 8 stories or more**, shall be abutted by sidewalks no less than 10ft in width.

Regs for Height District 4 - 12

- Building Height shall not exceed 4 stories. Additional stories, up to 12 stories max. shall be permitted based on meeting specific performance standards.
- Additional height for ornamental appurtenances may be permitted by BAR, based on architectural merit and context.
- Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances (mechanical and structural systems) **may exceed the maximum height when their visual impact is minimized**, based on the following standards:
 - They shall not exceed 9ft. in height.
 - They shall be placed to the rear or side of buildings where possible.
- Structures **more than 4 stories** shall be abutted by sidewalks no less than 10ft in width.

Stepbacks



BAR permissions (+)

- **Heights District 3:** The BAR may waive the limitation on habitable attic space based on architectural merit and context.
- **Heights District 2.5 - 3.5:** For multi-family buildings and PUDs, the BAR may permit up to 4 stories and up to a maximum 45 feet, based on architectural merit and context.
- **Heights Districts 3.5 & 4:** The BAR may permit an additional half story, based on architectural merit and context, up to a maximum of 50 feet overall.

BAR permissions (+)

- **Heights Districts 5, 6 & 8:** The BAR may permit the following:
 - An additional story based on architectural merit and context.
 - Additional height for “ornamental appurtenances” may be permitted by the BAR, based on architectural merit and context.
 - Additional height for utilitarian appurtenances related to mechanical equipment or structural systems may be permitted but shall not exceed 9ft.
- **Heights District 4 - 12:** The BAR may permit the following:
 - Additional height for “ornamental appurtenances” may be permitted by the BAR, based on architectural merit and context.

Architectural Merit

- **Architectural Merit defined:**
 - Buildings that are contextually appropriate;
 - Buildings that generally adhere to the new Principles; and
 - Buildings that contribute to, and improve the public realm.

Architectural Merit

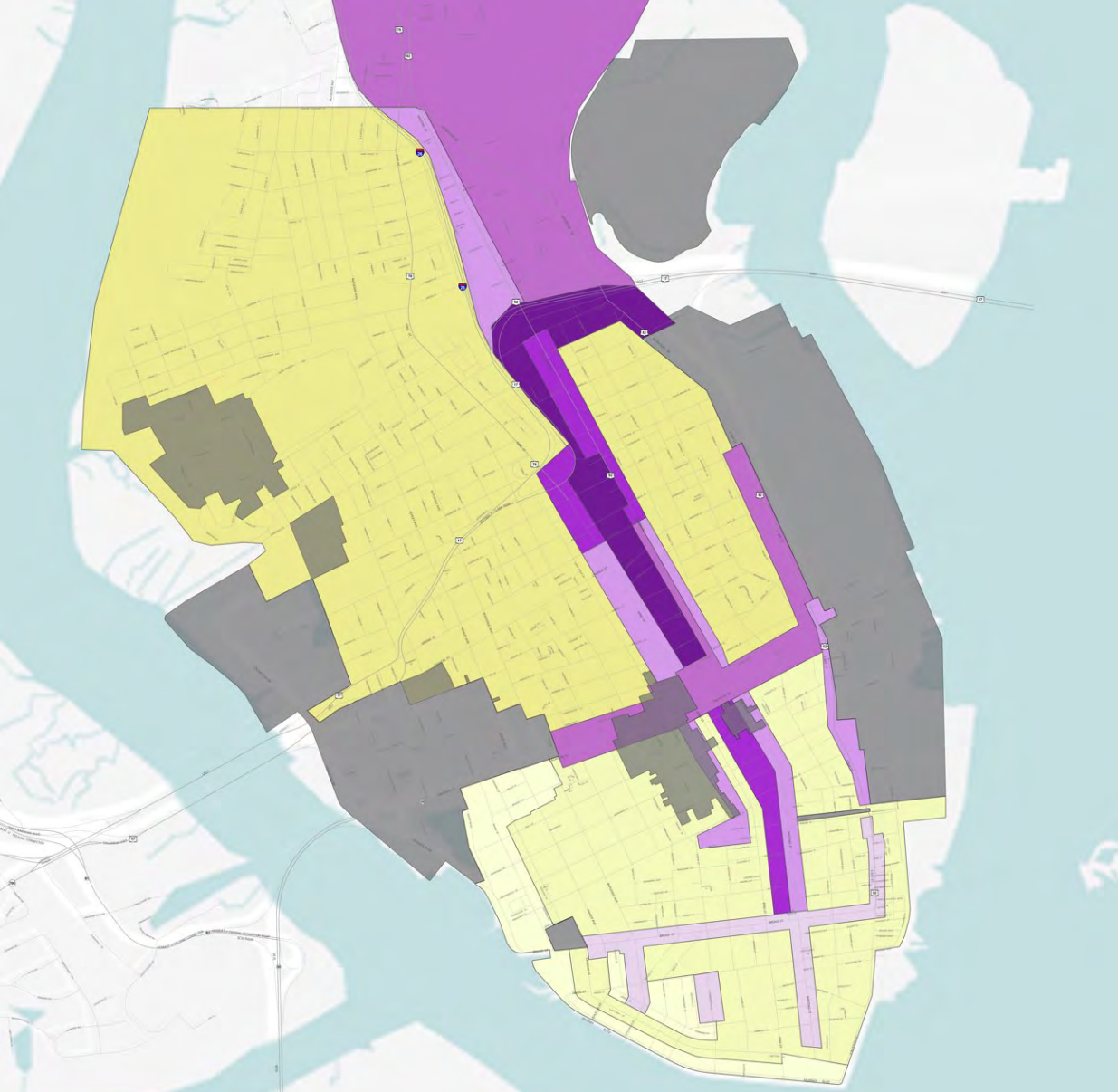


Proposed amendments to Rules of Procedure

BAR Rules of Procedure

Conduct of Hearing:

- Statement of matter to be heard
- Staff introduction of Project (n/a for Courtesy Review)
- Applicant presentation of Project
- Board & Staff questions to, and responses from, the applicant
- Public comments, followed by responses from applicant
- Staff recommendations
- BAR discussion
- Applicant points of clarification
- BAR action (n/a for Courtesy Review)



Courier Square by RAMSA



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